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New Role For The Attorney General?

The report that Attorney General Robert Kennedy is being groomed to take over as head of the Central Intelligence Agency has been discounted and pooh-poohed but it is dying hard, if at all; and some of the arguments against his appointment may actually be advanced in its favor.

The retirement of Allen Dulles, who is 68, was only a matter of months away before this Cuban fiasco came up, and his stay in Washington has certainly not been lengthened by the C.I.A.'s part in that affair.

Those who say the Attorney General isn't in line for the job argue that (1) there would be too much of a hue-and-cry over putting the President's brother in as head of this top-secret agency—the welding of the executive branch with its super-secret operations would be entirely too complete, and (2) that the younger Kennedy would be moving into a political cul-de-sac, a dead end.

On the other hand it might be said that (1) the President might be willing

to risk an outcry in order to establish a close family-type relationship with the C. I. A. operations, and (2) who can say but that Robert Kennedy might figure that clandestine job would be just the stepping stone he'd need in his onward and upward quest. Those cloak and dagger operations may have a certain glamor, after all.

It's a good bet, however, that he will be satisfied to stay where he is for the time being, because he is in the limelight now and would be operating in the shadows most of the time in the C. I. A.; Allen Dulles hasn't been in headlines much except when accused of some big mistake. And the limelight is one thing that the politically ambitious can't afford to avoid; for the public is fickle and has a short memory.

Besides, the chief of an intelligence agency must keep his mouth shut most of the time—and what bright young politico can afford to do that?